TO: Bibb County School District

FROM: Lauren Pace

DATE: June 7, 2016

RE: Use of Cross-Age Peer Mentoring Program Curriculum

Westside High School is currently taking strides to continue to improve the culture and climate of the school as well as ensure that all students’ needs are met by providing a safe environment in which all students can learn. To continue this progress, I propose that Westside High School work with Weaver Middle School to pilot a year-long mentorship program using the Cross-Age Peer Mentoring Program Curriculum. As a part of the mentoring program, a select group of high school students with strong leadership and communication skills as well as an interest in serving their communities will be trained and partnered with potentially at risk middle school students in order to foster student growth and development for both the mentor and mentee through a yearlong series of group and one-on-one mentoring sessions and activities that encourage student’s to become more aware of themselves, the school, and their future. Training for mentors will occur both at the start of the program and throughout the year with the help of a faculty sponsor.

The CAMP Curriculum is a fully developed guide for supporting one-on-one mentoring between high school students and both elementary and middle school students. This curriculum is supported by leading researchers in the field of mentoring due to its foundation in social-bonding theory and is intended for use with children attending schools in districts with high rates of high school failure and dropouts. The goals of the program are to promote mentees’ connectedness (to school, parents, and the future) and improve academic achievement by experiencing a supportive relationship with an older peer at school and practicing perspective-taking and social skills as well as school engagement.

The mission of Westside High School is to graduate students who demonstrate strength of character and are self-directed learners ready for college. To support the mission, Westside has made tremendous headway in recreating the school culture and climate and making school a positive experience for all students over the last few years. At the current time, however, Westside High School still has significant problems acclimating ninth grade students into the routines and procedures followed at the High School campus. Due to this, almost half of all disciplinary referrals pertain to ninth grade behavior issues. By implementing the CAMP Curriculum with potentially at-risk students at the middle school level, there will be more opportunities to shape students’ strength of character before and as they transition into high school by providing them with a role model to which they can connect with and learn from.

In order to implement this pilot program during the 2017-2018 school year, Westside High School and Weaver Middle School will need dedicated personnel to identify eligible students, develop a feasible and appropriate system for mentoring sessions and monitoring progress of the program, and acquire and maintain student and family engagement. Additionally, purchase of the CAMP Curriculum program manual, mentor training guide, and connectedness curriculum. At your convenience, I would like to schedule a meeting to further discuss the potential for this program in enhancing the culture and climate for students at Westside High School and Weaver Middle School.

Thank You,

Lauren Pace